

D

“Why I Chose the HIM Profession”

When I decided it was time to return to the work force from retirement, I was determined to do something very different from what I had previously done. With my experience, I thought I could easily find a job in a physician's office or in hospital admissions. It seemed a simple enough plan. However, as I scanned the job opportunities available in the healthcare field I came across terms such as, “coder”, “CCS”, “CCS-P”, “RHIT” and “RHIA”. I quickly realized that this was not going to be as easy as I imagined since I had no clue what any of those terms meant. As my curiosity was now aroused, I began to do some research.

My research first landed me in the office of a college recruiter on the near west side of Houston. The recruiter informed me that their program would allow me to complete my course of study in as little as nine months, which was appealing to me. Unfortunately, the high cost of the program was not as appealing. I left the campus and for the next few weeks avoided the constant calls from their recruiter. In spite of this harrowing initial experience, I knew that I wanted to pursue a career in healthcare.

Next, my research led me to the Health Information Technology (HITT) program at Houston Community College (HCC). Everything I read about the program told me this was the right place to start. Within a few weeks, I was enrolled in a General Biology class at HCC. It was a very exciting time in my life. I had always wanted to complete my college education, but had all but given up on the idea. However, I realized that to make myself a qualified job candidate, I needed to bring something to the table besides my previous work experience. A college education was just what the doctor ordered.

I had attended college when I first graduated from high school and again after I moved to Houston, however for a number of reasons I never completed attaining my degree. So now, faced with the reality of going back to school, I was elated. What attracted most to the HITT program was that after earning an associate degree, I would have a wide variety of job opportunities to choose from within the healthcare

D

field. My personality lends itself well to working in an administrative environment; however, it is the study of health sciences that I find truly fascinating. A career in health information is the best of both worlds. It combines the administrative aspect that I enjoy while allowing me to work surrounded by the health sciences I love.

One of the courses I took at HCC was "Introduction to Health Professions" which showed me that I enjoy mental activity, like the process of learning, am inquisitive, responsible, and ethical. These are all attributes that can serve me well as a health information management (HIM) professional.

Since I started the program in the fall of 2008, the opportunities in the HIT field have exploded. The government's focus on the electronic health record has brought national attention to the health information technology field. It is an exciting time to be in the midst of a growing field that is not only gaining in popularity but is garnering the attention and respect it deserves.

These last two years have been a challenge in many ways. Although academically a good student, I lacked the confidence that comes with achievement. Previously, I had a good job, yet I did not enjoy it. I stayed because I did not feel that I had any marketable skills. Going through the HIT program at HCC has changed how I perceive my marketable skill sets. I have had to learn to go outside my comfort zone and explore new activities, new people, and new experiences. After I complete the program and earn my certification, I know that I will not only have the skills and qualifications to obtain an RHIT position but also the confidence to meet any new challenges before me. With experience, my career options will only increase and that gives me the sense of fulfillment, independence, and security that I was looking for in a new career.

Thank you for your time and consideration.